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SUBJECT: GHANA POLICE SERVICE GRADUATES INSTRUCTORS AND
CADETS WHILE REFLECTING ON PROGRESS IN REFORMS

SUMMARY

1. Speaking at two recent graduation ceremonies for ICITAP-funded instructor development courses and the Ghana Police Service's 39th Cadet Officers' Course, GOG officials confirmed Ghana's commitment to ongoing training and lauded advances in the police training program, but admitted that shortfalls remain. President Kufuor challenged officers to protect citizens' rights while avoiding being unduly influenced by friends and family. Minister of Interior Kan-Dapaah praised integration of the ICITAP curriculum into Ghana's police training program. ICITAP graduates challenged their superiors to tackle problems in Ghana's current training programs. As a sign of continuing U.S. support for modernization of the Ghana Police Service (GPS), the Ambassador announced donation of 200 pairs of handcuffs. End Summary.

GRADUATING GHANA'S FINEST

2. As part of ongoing efforts to support the modernization of Ghana's police force, the Embassy took part in two recent graduation ceremonies for officers of the Ghana Police Service (GPS). On May 22, the Ambassador delivered remarks along with Minister of Interior Albert Kan-Dapaah and Inspector General of Police (IGP) Patrick Acheampong at a graduation ceremony at Ghana Police Headquarters in Accra for sixty-four participants in two eight-week "Basic Police Skills Instructor Development" courses. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) funded the courses, which were led by instructors from the Department of Justice's International Criminal and Investigative Training Program (ICITAP). The Commandant of the Ghana Police College, numerous high-ranking members of Ghana's law enforcement community, ICITAP trainers Robert Coburn and Darryl McEachern and Embassy Poloffs also attended.

3. Later that week, on May 26, the Ambassador and Poloff attended a graduation ceremony for the 39th Cadet Officers' Course held at the National Police Training School at Tesano, just outside of Accra. In contrast to the indoor and more intimate ICITAP graduation ceremony, the event on the parade grounds at Tesano consisted of marching, honoring of arriving dignitaries, cheering by crowds of supportive family members and an address by President John Kufuor, who commissioned the officers. Minister of Interior Kan-Dapaah, Minister of National Security Francis Poku, members of the diplomatic

corps and most of Ghana's high-ranking law enforcement officers also attended.

GHANA'S COMMITMENT TO ONGOING POLICE TRAINING

¶4. GOG speakers at the ICITAP graduation on May 22 focused on the government's commitment to support further training for Ghana's police. Noting that over 600 Ghanaian police officers of all ranks have been trained through ICITAP courses since Ghana's relationship with the program began in 1998, IGP Acheampong assured attendees that training remains a top priority of the administration.

¶5. "The police, perhaps more than any other institution, require regular training," said MOI Kan-Dapaah. Policing in a democratic society is a particularly difficult job, Kan-Dapaah continued, because officers must use their judgment about how and when to apply the law and must do so while protecting citizens' rights. Ghana is ready to embark on a national wealth development program, but must protect its early gains. The GOG will pursue efforts to empower police with the tools they need to help prevent erosion of these gains, Kan-Dapaah said.

TRAINING YIELDS ADVANCES, IDENTIFIES SHORTFALLS

¶6. The latest round of ICITAP-funded courses were specifically structured for Ghana, emphasized IGP Acheampong. The two eight-week courses covered a wide range of skills such as human rights, policing in a democracy, use of force, communications, civil disobedience, ethics, building and vehicle searches, and officer safety and survival, among others. As train-the-trainer courses, they also covered

conducting needs-analysis, using presentations and role-plays in teaching, and fostering teamwork among trainees. Attesting to the usefulness of the courses, IGP Acheampong confirmed that his Working Group for Curriculum Standardization had recommended that the full ICITAP curriculum be inserted completely into the current Ghana Police Service basic training program. In her subsequent remarks, the Ambassador noted that the Ghana Police Service had replicated the entire ICITAP basic training program earlier in 2006, reportedly the first time this has occurred in Africa.

¶7. Despite the positive tone of the ICITAP graduation ceremony, however, some speakers were not afraid to point out shortfalls in the GPS' current training programs and admonish the police for recent failures. Offering advice to the IGP during a report from the trainees' perspective, one officer said that through the ICITAP training courses, the students realized that their current training program puts too much emphasis on drill and repetition, yet too little emphasis on basic police skills at the cadet level, techniques for vehicle and building searches, officer rescue and use of force. Perhaps most important is lack of training in proper weapons handling, leading to a spate of recent incidents in which police have fired upon and killed civilians. In a new training program that the students developed, and which they plan to deliver to the IGP, weapons handling would become an integral part of the program, the student said. The Ambassador, praising the graduates for their achievements while reminding them that much work remains in modernizing Ghana's police force, told attendees she had taken note of the students' report and that the United States would work with the IGP and Ghana Police Service to tailor future trainings accordingly.

GHANA APPRECIATES INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

¶8. MOI Kan-Dapaah and IGP Acheampong uniformly expressed their appreciation for assistance provided by the United States through the ICITAP program. "Though Embassy staff come and go, the spirit of cooperation continues," IGP

Acheampong said, adding approvingly that USG funding remains uninterrupted through staff rotations. Confirming that U.S. support would continue, the Ambassador surprised the ICITAP ceremony audience by announcing that the United States would donate 200 pairs of handcuffs to the GPS.

KUFUOR PRAISES GRADUATES, CRITICIZES MAINTENANCE

¶9. President Kufuor, speaking at the 39th Cadet Officers' Course graduation on May 26, echoed the need for ongoing training raised by speakers at the May 22 ICITAP ceremony, saying that training must be updated continually to meet the challenges of modern policing. Police must always be mindful of their responsibility toward society, and the public, in turn, must support the police in order for them to be effective. In particular, the public must avoid seeking "undue influence" among the police through friends or relatives, Kufuor said.

¶10. Noting that the 39th Cadet Officers' Course is the largest training group since inception of the Ghana Police College in 1959, President Kufuor praised the increasing quality of incoming students, with incoming cadets now normally possessing advanced degrees. Making tacit reference to ICITAP, Kufuor lauded the police college for developing a new curriculum for modern policing and for incorporating skills and experience acquired by Ghanaian police who have participated in international peacekeeping missions or in overseas training programs.

¶11. President Kufuor also took a few moments to admonish the police service, however, expressing dismay at officers' laxity in maintaining government-provided equipment. Kufuor directed that the GPS immediately put measures into effect to curb such problems.

BRIDGEWATER